1: Federal W-5 (no date) 1986
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rooted fear of the unknown. Spirits, ghosts, and "cunjuh" all powerfully influence their daily existence.

Young and middle-aged persons, reticent before strangers, appear dubious and suspicious. They profess great knowledge of conjure and superstitions, but they hasten to say that they "sho ain't gonuh tell nobody" what they know about these things. The old inhabitants, more loquacious, enjoy relating their beliefs and customs to a willing listener.

Among the older inhabitants is Aunt Mary,* the daughter of a slave, who remembers the days when rice fields lay east of the town and it was no unusual sight to find a big "'gatuh" caught in the rice canal. Early morning finds Aunt Mary hobbling to her work of scrubbing the entrances to stores. In going to and from work she always drags a broom behind her. When we asked the reason for this, she answered, "'Cuz uh dohn wants none uh deze fixuhs tuh git muh foot track, cuz den dey kin hanl yuh jis lak dey wants tuh."[7]

"Do you really believe that, Aunt Mary? Do you believe in dreams and ghosts too?"

"I sho does belieb in dreams an ghoses. Ef uh hab suttn dreams, dey sho comes true. Tuh dream uh fresh poke some uh yuh kin folks gwine die; fresh beef mean duh det uh some wite pusson yuh knows well. Tuh dream uh a dead pusson is a sho sign uh rain, an anudduh sign uh rain is wen a suttn place on muh head itches."

The old woman switched her broom around under the other arm and continued, "As fuh ghoses, ain't uh got tuh belieb in um?[8] Wy, I kin see um muhsef. Yuh see, I wuz bawn wid a double caul obuh muh face an anybody knows dat a pusson bawn wid a caul obuh dey face kin sho see ghoses.[4] Deah's mo dan one kine uh ghos. Some come befo yuh natchul an pleasant; den some kin sho make yuh sked. I kin tell long fo anyting happen wen it gwine happen.

* *Mary Hunter, 548 East St. Julian Street.*

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Pin Point

PIN POINT, A NEGRO COMMUNITY ABOUT NINE MILES southeast of Savannah, is scattered over some twenty or thirty acres on a peninsula overlooking Shipyard Creek. Many of the small wooden cabins are neatly whitewashed and are half hidden by shrubbery and spreading oaks. Flowers and vegetables are planted in the most advantageous sunny spots near the houses and most of the yards are enclosed by picket fences, giving a cozy and pleasant privacy. The lanes, little more than wagon tracks, twist in and out and across the settlement. The informal and haphazard scattering of the houses, with high shrubbery bordering the lanes, gives an effect that is pleasing and unusual.

Pin Point has a church, a pavilion on the tidewater creek, and a crab cannery. The men and women who do not work as domestic servants at the nearby country places find employment in the crab cannery or fish and crab and shrimp for themselves. The life is quiet, soothed by the smell of the salt marsh.

It is only when some great excitement takes place, a stirring religious service, a dance at the community pavilion, a death,[37b, c] or some scandal concerning a neighbor, that quiet Pin Point bestirs itself. Recently, one of the fishermen ventured into the foreign waters of the Ogeechee about ten miles distant and there he was almost devoured by an alligator. All that was left of him, "the ham," was given a burial [2] amid the loud lamentations of his relatives and neighbors.

The people are, almost without exception, black or dark

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Sandfly

SANDFLY, ABOUT NINE MILES SOUTHEAST OF SAVANnah, is a scattered Negro community spreading through the hot pine barrens to the Isle of Hope. There is nothing unusual or outstanding about the sleepy little settlement; its three hundred inhabitants appear to lead a placid, uneventful existence.

Many of the houses are situated on a side road which leads to the Isle of Hope. Modern conveniences are lacking, but the nondescript dwellings are brightened by flower gardens in the front yards, while small truck gardens occupy the space to the rear and sides. The more substantial houses of the more prosperous citizens are set deep in the wooded sections and are reached by means of narrow winding paths bordered with giant moss-hung oak trees.

Usually life in Sandfly flows along pleasantly and without serious interruption. Even in the morning men and women sit around on porches or in yards, sometimes talking, sometimes dozing in the sun. The more industrious are at work in the gardens or may be seen through doors busily occupied in washing or ironing clothes. Many of the men are employed as fishermen or day laborers, and the women who work out are generally engaged as house servants in homes at near-by Isle of Hope.

At first residents of the community were reluctant to talk about their superstitions and beliefs and their knowledge of conjure. Their customary response when first approached was a laconic, "No, ma'am, I ain got no fait in sech tings as

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Grimball's Point

GRIMBALL'S POINT, LYING AT THE NORTHWESTERN end of the Isle of Hope on the marshes and creeks that run from the wide Skidaway River, is one of the characteristic spots of Savannah's rural landscape. The lowland spreads grassy flats against the horizon; the squawks of marsh hen rise from the long reeds on Grimball's Creek; all the year round a familiar sight is the Negro fisherman sitting patiently in his small bateau or trudging with his plump catch up an old oak-shaded shell road.

A few white residents maintain comfortable summer homes at Grimball's Point, but the settlers scattered on the southern part of the point are Negroes, former slaves and descendants of slaves who once worked the great plantations on the Isle of Hope and other near-by islands. Some of the inhabitants are employed on Grimball's Point hunting preserve, while others are farmers or fishermen. Their abodes are frame bungalows with front porches or little shacks of one or two rooms, but most of the dwellings are surrounded by sun-dappled yards, fenced with boards or chicken wire. Each has its backyard pump as there is no running water.

Of the ten Negro families on the point, young and old believe in signs and auguries. "Catfish Tom" William, Habersham Gibson, and Solomon Gibson professed to know that "some signs sho do wuk." Thomas Tuten, who has spent his fifty-eight years on the island, warned us that "yuh sho has tuh watch people cuz dey kin do yuh." Aging Aunt Cinda Smith, employed on the old Wiley place, is given the respect

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Sapelo Island

131 SAPELO ISLAND IS ONE OF THE CHAIN OF "GOLDEN
Isles" lying along the Georgia Coast. The word Sapelo was
103 derived from "Zapala," the name used by the Indians when
the island was a favorite hunting ground for the tribes that
had given up much of the mainland to the Spaniards and
172 later to the English. Among the landmarks that recall
colorful historical episodes are Indian mounds, tabby ruins
of colonial days, and the remains of a house built by Jean
Berard Mocquet, Marquis de Montalet, a French Royalist
who immigrated to Georgia from Santo Domingo about
1797.

000 Plantation life flourished on Sapelo in the early nine-
teenth century. Here Thomas Spalding conducted one of
the most extensive agricultural enterprises in the coastal
section. The "big house" on the south end of the island was
a spacious tabby mansion, so strongly constructed that the
original walls are still standing and form the nucleus of the
present dwelling. The island, with the exception of a num-
ber of Negro homesteads, is now the property of Richard
Reynolds of Winston-Salem, North Carolina, but, although
many improvements and changes have been made, much of
the atmosphere of the early days has been preserved.

•464 Industrial activity is concentrated in the central portion
of Sapelo, where there is a sawmill that gives employment to
many of the islanders. Nearby are the company houses, a
368 post office, and a store. Several Negro churches and a dance
hall are located elsewhere on the island.

2: Jones-Jackson L-5 (1973-1986) 1987
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received fair prices made money at the cost of selling their birthright. For those who were unwilling to sell, rising land values only meant rising property taxes. Many were forced to sell because they could no longer afford to keep up the additional tax burden. "We have witnessed land being sold because the family no longer wanted to tolerate taxes on land that's doing nothing," Campbell stresses. A money economy has come to Hilton Head and the other Sea Islands. Land is being sold, he points out, "merely because people, families, need the money."*

The resort island rich give Beaufort County, which includes Hilton Head and other Sea Islands, the second highest per capita income in South Carolina. But unemployment in the county surpasses the state average with depressing regularity. And half the county's nonagricultural employees work in low-paying service jobs—as caddies, cooks, maids, maintenance workers, waiters, and waitresses. It is certainly true that this generation of islanders is better paid than the generation before them; it is not necessarily true that they are economically better off. But the islanders now live in a money economy. They must earn money to live.

While low-paying service jobs are easily available on the resort islands, higher-paying skilled occupations are rare. And those positions are not normally filled by islanders, who usually lack the requisite education. Incentives to acquire an education for positions that seem to be set aside for outsiders are lacking; incentives to take the low-paying jobs are abundant. The situation "enslaves" young people, says Emory Campbell. "They forget that a job is only a means to an end." Sea Island blacks "are not motivated to go beyond the tenth, eleventh grade because they see the immediacy of the dollar," he notes. But education does not seem to break the cycle on the Sea Islands. "The few that have gone to college, they're motivated to leave rather than to stay. They can't tolerate the situation. We just don't have the kinds of jobs here that would dignify staying. They become overwhelmed by the subservient roles that most blacks are put in here."

*I was present at the exchange between Charles E. Fraser and Emory Campbell in Charleston on December 3, 1982. The occasion was a conference entitled "Coastal Development: Past, Present, and Future," organized by the Coastal Heritage Program of the South Carolina Sea Grant Consortium with support from the South Carolina Committee for the Humanities. Their remarks are printed in the proceedings of the conference, pp. 55–56, 63. Additional comments by Campbell are taken from "We Are an Endangered Species: An Interview with Emory Campbell," by Vernie Singleton, *Southern Exposure* 10 (May–June, 1982): 37–39.

2: Jones-Jackson L-5 (1973-1986) 1987
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177 •464 Fraser is sensitive to charges that hiring practices are discriminatory. "I get continued crap that we should confine our employment exclusively to people who were born on Hilton Head Island, without regard to their ability or what they do," he complains. "When we had a vice president for personnel, black, college educated, graduate degree in personnel management, we got nothing but hell because he had not been born on Hilton Head Island. This is the sort of crap we get over and over again." Fraser's preference for well-qualified employees to fill upper-echelon positions is understandable. But the fact remains that of all the jobs created by development on the Sea Islands, virtually the only ones which are available to the Sea Islanders themselves are jobs as servants.

177 Even more striking than the economic consequences of development on the indigenous population of the Sea Islands has been its cultural impact. Modernization has caused severe social dislocations. "Developers just come in and roll over whoever is there," charges Emory Campbell, "move them out or roll over them and change their culture, change their way of life, destroy the environment, and therefore the culture has to be changed." Perhaps the unintentional vanguard of white cultural imperialism has been the school. Campbell calls for a school system "that is in tune with the culture of the black child of this island. That child's heritage," he notes, "is different from a child who came here from Chicago, New York, or Ohio. And that's where a lot of our white kids are coming from; so you put them in a 177 871 classroom and say you're integrated and you've got a classroom situation at Hilton Head Elementary School that's oriented to those kids who are moving in." Teachers with little understanding of the islands' rich historical and cultural heritage criticize the island children's Gullah speech—as though the children were the outsiders who speak [193] funny! They do not know that Gullah is a creole language with a very [194] regular syntax and phonology of its own. They do not know that other forms of the islanders' cultural expression are parts of an ancient and beautiful tradition with a rich history behind it. It is little wonder that many Sea Island children—in the face of daily assaults on the way they talk and the way they express themselves—see the school as the enemy, taking away more than it gives. With white dominance of the economic and educational systems some Sea Islanders have become ashamed of their culture. Thus the schools, intended to be the agents of cultural enrichment, have become agents of cultural destruction.

2: Jones-Jackson L-5 (1973-1986) 1987
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tained 30,922 whites and 71,868 blacks. By 1940 the Sea Island communities still maintained a majority black population. The 1940 census for Johns Island, South Carolina, revealed that of the 3,534 residents of the island, 2,623 were black. On Wadmalaw Island, where many of the data for this study were collected, only 251 of the 1,607 inhabitants in 1940 were white. The black-to-white ratio of Charleston County and the surrounding Sea Islands remained fairly stable until the late 1930s and the 1940s. The BCD Council of Governments records that between 1930 and 1970 Charleston County witnessed a 145% population increase, with further increments of approximately 4,200 persons per year between 1970 and 1978. This population growth is largely attributed to the increasing industrialization and commercialization brought by the new bridges connecting many of the islands to the coast. Most of the immigration since 1930 has been by whites. The 1970 census indicated that blacks constituted only 31.4 percent of the population of Charleston County, compared to more than 50 percent in 1930.[15]

While this distribution does reflect a major change in racial composition, especially in the Charleston County area during the last 100 or more years, the demographic picture of the Sea Islands is somewhat obscured by the distribution of the new arrivals. Only a few of the Sea Islands have experienced major changes in population and industrialization, and these are not among the most remote and economically distressed areas. Unemployment and population lag seem to be related to remoteness: islands with adequate bridges and paved roadways that provide excellent access to and from the Charleston area, like James and Johns in South Carolina, are undergoing significant population growth, as is shown in Table 2.

The population growth for the Johns Island Division is due to major commercialization and to developmental pressures from the exclusive resort construction still occurring on Kiawah and Seabrook Islands, which are a part of the division (see Appendix 4).[A] James Island, situated just over the bridge from Charleston, is highly urbanized and is one of the major arteries to the Folly Beach area. The new inhabitants in both island divisions, as elsewhere, are primarily white. Whereas blacks constituted approximately 80 percent of the total population of the Johns Island township in 1940, only 41 percent of the island residents were black in 1970, and that ratio remained relatively stable through 1980.[16]

As the data in Table 2 indicate, Wadmalaw and Edisto, com-

A. [For Appendix 4, see Category 423, pp. 165-168--Analyst]

2: Jones-Jackson L-5 (1973-1986) 1987
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Table 2. Racial Breakdowns for Five of the Carolina Sea Islands

Year	Population	Edisto	James	Johns	Wadmalaw	St. Helena
1930	Total	1,948	3,058	3,264	2,054	4,626
	Black	1,693	2,419	2,826	1,813	4,458
1940	Total	1,955	3,913	3,534	1,858	4,266
	Black	1,717	2,709	2,633	1,607	3,961
1960	Total	1,589	13,872	6,252	2,326	6,048
	Black	1,306	4,168	3,260	1,980	4,994
1970	Total	1,374	18,969	7,530	2,024	5,718
	Black	1,115	5,217	3,104	1,719	4,278
1980	Total	1,345	27,719	9,296	2,440	8,134
	Black	1,124	6,173	3,975	1,935	4,934

Source: U.S. censuses of population.

paratively remote, do not show any significant population changes. In the late 1970s Edisto Island had only 19 persons per square mile dispersed over a 72.6-square-mile land area. The 1980 census revealed a population of 1,345 persons—another slight decrease. Edisto's population remains predominantly black (84 percent). Its slow growth is attributed to the lack of incorporated areas, of major manufacturers, and of essential services such as water and sewer.[17]

Wadmalaw Island, situated between Johns and Edisto, is rural in nature and like Edisto has exhibited very little in- or out-migration. In 1970, 85 percent of the people were black, and this figure had dropped only to 79 percent in 1980. Even though 80 percent of the housing is occupied by owners, Wadmalaw is ranked second in the region in economic distress. It has no water or sewer services, and its only industry is Metal Trades, which provides services primarily for ship repair. Most of the inhabitants are laborers, farmers, and fishermen, though there are an increasing number of professional persons who have returned home to the island to work as doctors, lawyers, teachers, and so on.[18]

The addition of more whites is not precipitating an erosion of the traditional social and racial composition of most of the Sea Island communities. They remain isolated, with predominantly black populations. Only the most readily accessible islands, particularly James,

2: Jones-Jackson L-5 (1973-1986) 1987
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161 Table 3. Population Projection for Charleston County

	1970	1975	1980	1985	1990	1995
Edisto Island	1,374	1,170	1,120	1,110	1,150	1,190
James Island	24,197	25,944	29,280	33,064	36,890	40,450
Johns Island	7,530	8,853	10,483	12,016	13,469	14,999
McClellanville*	4,094	3,867	3,814	3,905	3,994	4,125
Wadmalaw Island	2,024	1,900	2,150	2,250	2,450	2,650

Source: BCD Council of Governments *Regional Housing Market Analysis*, 1979, p. 21.
*McClellanville is not a Sea Island. It is included here because it is a coastal city that has always had a concentration of African-Americans, most of whom do speak a variety of Gullah.

563 161 Johns, Kiawah, and Seabrook, have undergone significant population changes in the recent past (see Table 3).

Economy

433 241 (178) (464) In the past, the Sea Islanders depended on agriculture and their natural environment for survival. Without a doubt, the new job opportunities brought to some of the islands by industry and commerce will affect this pattern. In fact, current census data indicate that farming is already being abandoned in exchange for more lucrative livelihoods. By 1970 only 10 percent of the people on Johns Island and 15 percent of those on Wadmalaw were farmers. The figures for farm laborers were 13.4 percent on Johns, 20.8 percent on Wadmalaw. The Kiawah Island Company painted a glowing picture of the employment opportunities that the resort could offer to area residents, estimating that "operating employment for the resort would range from 476 to 511 in 1976, increase yearly to a range of 1,227 to 1,473 by 1980, and climb to an incredible 4,034 to 4,458 jobs by 1990." Although the company's figures have proved thus far to be somewhat optimistic, the resort development has indeed provided jobs for Sea Islanders:

464 177

> On Kiawah Island, blacks from Johns, Wadmalaw, and other areas have recently received both construction and operations jobs, although the skill levels these jobs involve are either fairly high or fairly low. Kiawah estimates, for example, that in August of 1976

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there were 181 construction workers on their island, and 38 or 40 percent of those were black, although all did not come from the immediate area. In the area of operations employment, 111 of 250 total workers on Kiawah or 44 percent were from Johns, Wadmalaw, or Yonges in April of 1976. These are startup operations, but the same trends can be observed on Hilton Head Island. At the Hilton Head Company, 37 of the 103 workers are minorities, as compared to 40 percent local residents as employees for the local Holiday Inn.[19]

Despite these improved job opportunities, the Sea Islands remain among areas listed by the BCD Council of Governments as economically distressed. For example, Edisto Island had a 1970 median family income of about $2,500. Approximately 60 percent of Edisto's population reported incomes below the 1970 poverty level. Of the 2,024 residents on Wadmalaw Island, 1,053 had incomes below the poverty level; the median income for Wadmalaw was $4,700.[20]

The high poverty levels reported for the Sea Island areas are related not so much to the employment opportunities in the area as to a lack of skills that prevents the islanders from applying for well-paid jobs. In 1980 more than 50 percent of the respondents in one study undertaken on Wadmalaw, Johns, and James islands had less than a ninth-grade education (though there are many permanent inhabitants of the Sea Islands who hold university and professional degrees). Members of the labor force in 1980 were employed as unskilled private household workers, maintenance workers, clerks, food service workers, unskilled hospital personnel, and the like.[21]

As noted, the agricultural patterns have changed over the years. When the Indians had been driven out of the islands, the land was owned partly by tenant black farmers and partly by white planters whose acreage was worked by African slaves. Immediately after the Civil War, only blacks could buy land in the region. Thousands of acres had been left by planters when they fled from the Union troops. They could not buy back the land because they could not pay the federal direct tax imposed by the Washington government, and even if they had been financially able to pay the taxes, they could not have made their way through the Union camps to do so. The federal government and various societies in the North wishing to befriend the blacks wanted the island property to go to the free slaves. To meet this inten-

41 Carawan & Carawan B,Z-5 (1959-1988) 1989
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INTRODUCTION

IT HAS BEEN more than twenty years since *Ain't You Got a Right to the Tree of Life?* was first published—twenty-three years since the material was recorded and the original photographs were taken. In some ways the world pictured in those photographs no longer exists. When you visit the island now, you are immediately aware of change. There are many more houses and signs of prosperity. Most of the older, weathered, wooden homes are gone, replaced by brick or newer wood ones. The two main roads are heavily traveled now, primarily by people on their way to the two resort communities adjacent to Johns Island—Kiawah and Seabrook. On the major crossroads there are small shopping centers and in the summer months produce stands to market vegetables to resort-goers.

In the early 1960s the islanders were hard-pressed people—maids, cooks, farmhands, and laborers. The level of education for most was quite low and yet we found an insight and wisdom about life, and particularly a richness of folk expression, that was inspirational. Before Guy came to Johns Island, he had traveled and worked in many parts of the South. A musician with training in folklore, he had a keen appreciation for the depth and variety of southern folk culture. On Johns Island he found something special, a world with a beautiful and flourishing cultural heritage unlike any he had encountered before. He felt it should be shared with many more people and nurtured in a way that would enable it to survive. Yet Johns Island was in the midst of cultural and social transition. How could he, as a visitor, make a contribution to its survival? We would spend the two years we lived on Johns Island in 1963–65 struggling with that question and trying a variety of projects designed to focus attention on the cultural richness of the

4: Carawan & Carawan B,Z-5 (1959-1988) 1989
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good deal. He founded the Committee on Better Racial Assurance (COBRA), a multi-issue community organization in Charleston also serving the sea islands. He has been chairman of the Charleston County Democratic party. He ran for state senate and received support in both the black and white communities. He is the owner of WPAL, a vital radio station in Charleston that consistently addresses social issues as well as responds to the musical tastes of the community. He was the principal mediator in the major civil rights campaign of the Charleston area—a strike of hospital workers in the late 1960s.

The job situation on Johns Island has improved slightly. In the 1960s all young people who finished high school left the area to find work. Now, with improved transportation, it is possible for them to work in Charleston and still live on the island. The resort developments and the new small businesses offer some employment, but farming, long a mainstay in the island economy, is steadily declining. Farmland is now the prime target of developers. But the people who have stayed on Johns Island have held onto a firm determination to live in their traditional community, and many of their hopes and dreams are still in place.

Development on Johns Island has taken two forms. Tourist development, spreading rapidly all along the coastal islands south of Washington, D.C., is a threat to the indigenous population on Johns Island. Kiawah and Seabrook, accessible only by driving across Johns Island, are full-fledged resort communities with condominiums, hotels and inns, shops and boutiques, and large private homes. Both are entered by passing through a security checkpoint. Viewed initially as offering some economic and social benefits to island residents, both have been disappointing, catering to wealthy visitors from outside the region and offering only menial and limited employment. Wadmalaw Island, just across the Esau Jenkins Memorial Bridge from Johns Island, is in the throws of plans for development. An island committee made up of black and white landowners has been meeting regularly to design their own development plan that may

(P XIII, B)

4: Carawan & Carawan B,Z-5 (1959-1988) 1989
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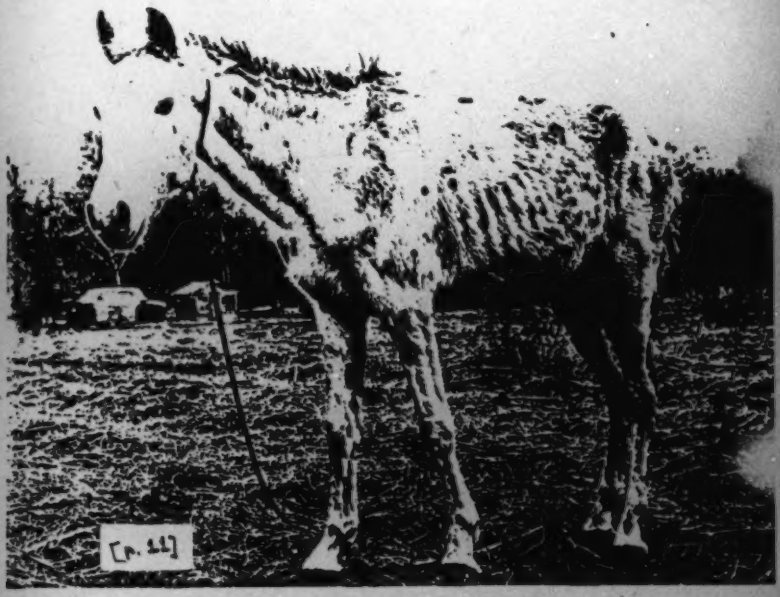
722 power, see? That's when the farming situation changed; they built these roads, and they began to produce more food for defense. White farmers. Negroes have come to tractors in later years, after they got on their feet. But they have small farms. No comparison with white farms.

(178) (241) (423) There weren't too many white people here then, but they owned most of the land and they had the farms. The Negroes were little farmers. Many of them had their own lots, but weren't able to build a house. World War II came, they were able to make some money and they moved off the farms and built little homes.

●464 More people work in the city now. Nothing here to do except a few farmers to work for. Few women have employment on the farm. They work in the city as domestics. You find a few on the farm here and there. In the springtime they take trucks around and pick up the hands for the day.

231



4: Carawan & Carawan B,Z-5 (1959-1988) 1989
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Mr. Esau Jenkins

SOMETIMES WE UNDERESTIMATE THESE PEOPLE

• 464 The people on Johns Island, those that are not working in the city or as domestics, most of them make their living off truck farms on the island. Especially the women. They work on the farms of plantation owners. They pick snap beans, they dig white potatoes, they pick tomatoes, pack cabbages, spinach and whatnot. Those are the things that they depend on for a living.

During the winter months they go into a hardship because most of the farms don't have anything to do. That's the hardest time that they have to face.

Sometimes we underestimate these people and forget they have something we really need. These are people who haven't gotten a college education, or even a high school education. But anyone able to raise twelve children—and raise 'em healthy too—must know something good. They were smart enough to plant and to raise the kind of thing the children need. They raised their own hogs, they raised their cows, they had the milk with vitamin D what they need.

Some of these older people thought very deeply. Mother-wit and faith in God helped them to do a lot, and some achieved more than some of the young people who have been able to go to college.

4: Carawan & Carawan B,Z-5 (1959-1988) 1989
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159 he teach me how to paddle a boat. After he died, I took it up myself. I did
226 the same thing: go in the river and catch some fish and sell it. Most of it is mullet fish, mullet and spots, and some catfish, all different kinds. Cast net. Run from three to four feet deep to maybe sometimes seven to eight feet deep. I go by myself or with my brother.

159 I began to do some carpenter work too. I was working along with a
[335] carpenter, and after a time I began to learn how to do some of the work for myself. So I finally try alone, and I made it all right. I do my own work now.
● [401] I'm working at a block and pipe company—making door lintels and window lintels, all different kinds of stone.

[434] The best kind of money people can make is on electricity works and
[241] chanical works and maybe expert carpenters and bricklayers. Harvesting season in the fall, you can't make much because it's only about three or four weeks long. You can do all right for those three or four weeks. You can make it anyhow. But 'round May and June, that's about the best months of the year on the farm. October you start having maybe some string beans. Then you sit 'til next year in May and June.

Mr. Benjamin Bligen
MORE LIGHT IS SHINING

I am forty. The look of the pudding is not the taste all the time. I have two children. I have a better time raising mine than my parents had raising us. Foods went up a lot, but still you can make it a little better now than you is in past time.

More light is shining. Can see more. Likewise you can do more and think more, 'cause I believe that more light is shining now than was shining in the past. And so help me God, I so glad that I can see some light. And I know there's more light for me. There is a bright light somewhere and I'm going to find it.

4: Carawan & Carawan B,Z-5 (1959-1988) 1989
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159
584 was there. I didn't have no partner to pick up potato with, so he say, "Come on; I'll be your partner." So we was partner for the day, picking up potato until over with. And when I get 'round about fifteen, sixteen years old, he come to my house and ask my mother can he keep my company. My mother ask me, will I accept it. First I say I don't know. So he come back and come back. And finally he wrote my mother a letter. Mother call me, she ask me, will I accept Arthur Lee company. So I say yes.

Those years keeping company I doesn't go out with no fellas, but I does see other boys, talk to them, go out to a party my brother be along. But I never love but one, and that's the one I get married to.

159
404 Now I'm twenty-five. I have five children. I work from seven in the morning 'til five-thirty in the evening—five days a week doing kitchen work. I mind five children, and when I get home I got to take care of five of my own.

My husband leave home 'bout six in the morning for he to wait on the road for a ride to go to work. He don't have he own transportation. He works out on contractor job, 'round about four years now.

(465) It's tough to raise five children—sure is. My husband make 'round thirty, sometime forty dollars a week. And if it rain he don't bring in that because he don't work. I get paid for holiday when I'm off, but my husband don't get paid. He just have to wait it out. My mother used to take care of (855) the children that aren't in school before the house burn down, but now I don't have anyone to take care of them. I have to stay off from work and start all over housewife again.

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Mr. William Saunders

INTIMIDATION HAS BEEN BAD

177 824 The whites and the Negroes on this island haven't gotten involved in violence. But the intimidation, I think, has been bad as far as the white is concerned. Like making a person feel like he might not have a job tomorrow. This is something that bothers the Negroes a whole lot. Although it never bothered me because I feel like anybody that works me, he's working me because he's making some money off me, he's not working me because he likes me. He's working me because I'm a good worker and he needs me. And I believe that we all need each other--without the whites the Negro couldn't make it; and I believe without the Negroes the whites couldn't make it.

177 824 464 They've used the migrant workers in this intimidation. When I first knew about the migrant workers, they were really, really treated bad. They had no place to stay when they came here, and they were always treated bad. But since the integration movement has started here on the island, I think the white farmers have really gone for the migrant workers because they know that the migrant laborers really don't stand for nothing. They're just somebody to work.

Most of them, I've found out, have been in trouble before. They had trouble somewhere, or they couldn't make it at home, or something like that, and that's how come they become migrant laborers. So the white farmers figure, "Here's a chance for us to use the Negroes without the Negroes really being able to do anything about it. We don't have to worry about them getting an education. All they want to do is get our crops out, and then we can sort of hurt the Negroes here on the island by doing it this way."

The biggest farmer here, during the last season, he was working the migrant laborers three days and the regular Negroes on the island two days a week. So this is something where the Negroes used to look forward to (465) making during the summertime eighty or ninety dollars a week, it be cut down to thirty-five or forty dollars a week.

177 824 This is to try to keep the Negroes from participating in things. It doesn't matter whether he or she has been participating or not, he's automatically placed in this category. Two farmers came by the Progressive Club last year during the workshops there and acted like they were taking down license numbers. Nobody knows if they were actually taking down the numbers or not; they never published them, but this really scared a lot of Negroes and they wouldn't even want to bring their cars around.

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Mr. William Saunders

WHEN YOU FINISH THIS HIGH SCHOOL, YOU AREN'T PREPARED FOR ANY JOB

177 829 882 Most of the kids that leave the island, I would say ninety percent of 'em go to New York. And to me, New York is about the worst place that any good youngster could go. They'll come back and tell you that they're living nice, everything is really nice. The young girls go away angels, have never had anything to do with a man, and they go away for about two years and come back with three babies. And a lot of the kids get to be addicts. Some of them do all right, come back driving big cars and really influencing the kids that are here to go away.

873 829 882 The kids that get college education, it might help them individually but it sure doesn't help this island. It seems like they forget from where they came, or what they've suffered through, and the help that the rest of the people need. And our schools don't offer what the kids need to go to college anyhow. Yet our kids will get out of school and won't come back home to try to help the kids to get what they really need to even go to college. You can be an A-student here on the island, which don't take very much, and go to college and be a C-student or even flunk out.

When you graduate from this high school you aren't prepared for any job, except farming. You can't borrow no money from the bank to start a farm of your own, so they just prepare you to work on a farm here. They now offer typing, but like my first cousin was an honor student at Haut Gap and her teacher told her that she was too smart to take typing and shorthand. She tried to get into this new Technical Educational Center here and she couldn't get in. So now she's in New York. I know she's an angel, but what's going to be her fate? We don't know. She wrote back home and told her daddy, "Please make sure my brothers and sisters (she got about six or seven) get shorthand and typing." So her daddy bought a typewriter and got everybody in the house typing now.

Rev. G. C. Brown

IF WE COULD ONLY KEEP OUR YOUNG PEOPLE HERE

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If we could only keep our young people here, but now when they finish high school, most of 'em go. They don't stay here to help you develop things. They're looking for better wages--fact, they have to do that. There's

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nothing much for them to do here but cut cabbages or run a tractor, maybe drive a truck or do something in the field. And there's not much money in it for them.

They mostly go to New York and find jobs somehow or other—working as domestics or doing small factory work. Very few ever come back to live. They come back to visit about once a year. But they don't ever come back to live.

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Mr. William Saunders

GOING TO NEW YORK IS AN ADVANTAGE AND A DISADVANTAGE

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Most people think about their kids. It's so hard raising kids in New York. And it's so easy for kids to go bad there. So most of the kids are left here with the grandparents while the parents are in New York working, and when they get a certain age they think about it. And they rebel. They find something bad to do. They try to get back somehow at their parents.

855 603

Most of the people that go away from here leave their kids. If the wife and the husband are going to be working, they have nobody to care for the kids, so they leave them home. And the grandparents have gotten to a certain age, they raised their kids, and they're so much more lenient on their grandkids than they were on their own kids. So this is one of the real big problems, I think. The kids suffer.

855 603 199 593

I was born in New York. I was one of these babies that was shipped here—not even somebody bringing me, they used to put tags on you and just put you on the train and say where you're supposed to get off at. I was raised by my grandparents and actually when a grandparent raise a kid, there are two generations between, and there's so much less understanding there. Things that the parents would probably understand, the grandparents cannot understand. And this was my problem.

This is something that is still going on, and I think it's gonna be going on and on. And this is one of the things that the Negroes have really been suffering from—this grandparents raising the children and the children not getting actually what they need. I believe if a kid really wants something, like he wants music lessons or he wants to study farming, or anything, if they say that they *want* to do it, I think that somebody should be there to help them with it. So even if they fail, they can't say, "I didn't have the opportunity." I think he should have the right to try, and if he fails, he can't blame nobody but himself because he just couldn't make it.

But like me now, I can sit back and blame my grandparents and my parents for not being successful. I don't know, I just feel to me that I could have been somebody. And I got somebody to blame for not being somebody.

Kids here need an opportunity.

464 199 855

Going to New York is a disadvantage and an advantage. To live I think it's a disadvantage. Some things are lacking here, but the children have a home. So we don't have everything that we want for them. But they have their home, so all they need is to get along like everybody else—daily living.

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And it really shouldn't be that hard. The pay here is less, but you don't have to pay rent, and the food is cheaper. They go to New York and then they come back here on their vacation and tell you how silly you are to be here. And what they bring here is a new car, but then you have a car and you have a house, so what is it they're bringing? They're making more but they're spending more. But yet you're here with your kids, and they aren't.

And really they miss everything about home up there. That's why you find Christmas times or holiday times they don't want to be in New York, they want to be home. They miss the atmosphere, the friendliness of the people. You can go to anybody's house, the people don't have no money in the bank, they don't have no money under their mattress, but they got a whole lot of food. I don't believe there's a house around here where they ain't got a whole lot of food, got a little moonshine to drink on the holidays.

A lot of my friends say if they could make even thirty dollars a week less than they make in New York they would come back home.

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Mr. Abraham Jenkins

PEOPLE DON'T SEE THAT "BIG SANTA CLAUS" THEY ONCE THOUGHT OF

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464 People saw what happened when all that money came in with Kiawah and yet no one that I know got in any of those administrative positions out there. You find a few people got into the more menial jobs. Ninety percent of the jobs are in the lowest level, and then maybe five to ten percent are in a higher bracket, but not up in the really well-paid bracket. So people don't see that "big Santa Claus" they once thought of.

Mr. William Saunders

THEY WERE NEVER CONCERNED ABOUT THE PEOPLE THAT LIVE ON THOSE ISLANDS

185 I get pretty upset about things. There was a million dollars spent on turtles on Kiawah, because these people were concerned about the turtles. But they were never concerned about the people that live on those islands.

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491 Still, as long as I can get some help from those people, then I don't have any problem with their lives. The moment all those rich people begin staying on Kiawah and Seabrook, they begin to improve the roads. Although it was built for them, I use it. It's accessible to everyone. And the people on Kiawah and Seabrook are pretty much conservationists, so they back most anything leaving things the way they are.

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Mr. William Saunders

THE SEA ISLAND HEALTH CARE CORPORATION WAS A POWER BASE

178 185 94 [734] [737] [665] I think the housing, the health care facility, you have to look at it as an elevation, an improvement. We had the foresight with the health center to add the nursing home and the home for the elderly, so even when they took our health center grant away from us, we owned the building and we owned the property. The health center is now being run by the City of Charleston. The taking over was really a political party fight. In 1980 the Republican party needed to be able to say that they got something going on in the community, so what they did, they found problems with a lot of stuff that was already there—got rid of the Board, got a new Board, and allowed it to function.

185 94 [734] [362] Anytime you're talking about being able to control something, anytime you're talking about power, then you're talking about something real that was done. The Sea Island Health Care Corporation was a power base that we put together that exists. It really exists today. We've got forty acres of very choice land. The city now wants twelve acres of it. That's the kind of thing where Esau and others were thinking ahead and did things in advance, and we planned that one way ahead of everybody. And it's there. We've got control of the nursing home and the housing.

Mr. William Saunders

THERE'S A LOT OF RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN HEALTH AND POVERTY

Our goal for the Comprehensive Health Center was that it would serve everybody on the islands and would be totally independent. The first director, Jim Martin, was a real strategist. He and I used to spend hours dreaming and scheming about what could be, how you could work politically within the system and make things work. Jim was a past master at that.

[758] [464] Beyond just providing health services, for awhile the Health Care Corporation was the biggest employer on the island. We found that when people were working, they were healthier simply because they were making their own living. There's a lot of relationship between health and poverty.

741 758 743 [427] We were looking to be able to sell health care to Kiawah and to Seabrook and to the other big interests on the island, which would have actually made the health center self-sufficient. You would not have needed any governmental money. We were just about there when they took it away from us. We don't have control of the daily operation of the clinic. But the people who are using it have to pay us rent. It's a good bit less service than it used to be. But it could come back. The whole facility is there, so the possibilities are unlimited.

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Mr. Gerald Mackey

YOU NEVER KNOW THE NUMBER OF LIVES YOU TOUCH

The employment situation for young people nationwide is extremely frustrating. I work with the division of personnel for the Charleston County School District. We have problems getting black teachers in the school system. For example, Charleston County hired approximately 224 teachers at the beginning of the school year and approximately 21 of the 224 were black. When you look at the racial composition of the district, you have more black than white students. So we have a problem with black teachers and administrators coming into the district. It's one of the reasons why the desegregation suit brought by the Justice Department and others is now going on.

In some schools in the county, we have no black teachers. In some of the larger schools, you might have two or three. There is no equity in student-teacher ratio in terms of black and white. So the kids have very few black role models in terms of teachers. That's a very sad indictment on a system when kids come up from kindergarten through high school and not see a black teacher. Another argument that we make in the county is that blacks are not going into teaching. They're considering other options like science or math, and they're going into the industries. They're studying computer science and engineering and medicine, and they're not going into teaching. But it's going to be sad again for the kids.

I wouldn't trade my experience of being a classroom teacher for anything in the world. You never know the number of lives you touch. Teaching is very rewarding.

Mr. Abraham Jenkins

I THINK THAT'S A STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION

With the Sea Island Health Care Corporation, the Citizens' Committee, the Ministerial Alliance, Johns Island's going to be a better place to live. With the dedication we have now we have turned that exodus of young people leaving the island around. We have seen some engineers and attorneys and professional people coming back home to live. And if they're not living here, they're still making a contribution by coming back periodically, making their presence known, sharing their knowledge, or making a financial contribution. There's much more of that now than there was ten years ago. I think that's a step in the right direction.

000 skilled in bad weather. The best of the inhabitable land
423 has been owned by two or three black families since the last
half of the nineteenth century. Most of the present inhabi-
602 tants are related to each other, at least distantly. A few
177 white sportsmen have established hunting lodges on the unin-
habited portions of the island, and a land development company
has been draining some marshes in order to build waterfront
resort homes. At the time of the present study, however, all
101 people present on a daily basis on the island were members
186 of the black community. The island is well-known to residents
of Georgetown County, even though few have visited it. It
is generally considered to be a mysterious and somewhat back-
ward place. High school students tell of being teased about
coming from the island and being looked upon as somehow dif-
ferent and perhaps unsophisticated. Teachers in mainland
schools note the close friendships between island children
and the in-group humor characteristic of them; some teachers
consider their language distinctive, but others do not.

243 Historically, the economy of the island was based
433 upon rice. Once at least nine major plantations flourished
• [464] there, worked and probably managed largely by black labor.
Few of the white owners made permanent homes on the island,
probably no more than two families at any one time. The
[423] majority of the land remains in the hands of white individual
owners or corporations, but they remain absentee owners.
Long after rice had ceased to be a major factor in the rest

243 of the county's economy, it was still cultivated on the river
433 island for the consumption of its inhabitants, with some surplus sold for cash. Two men in their eighties could describe in detail each phase of the long growing season, and the utensils used in processing the ripened grain. During the
• [464] lifetimes of these man, however, the island made the transition from a subsistence farming economy to one based on
464 laboring jobs held in mainland communities. Typically, young men went to live in nearby towns for periods ranging from two weeks to several years, working at jobs in lumber mills, in shipyards, on ocean-going vessels, and even in New York factories. Other men and women took laboring jobs on farms
243 and plantations closer to the island. The rice crop was still cultivated during this transition period, but by the thirties the cultivation was essentially under the supervision of one older man, a preacher and permanent resident of
243 the island. At times when intensive heavy labor was needed
464 for the crop, many of those who were working off the island returned to help in the harvest. With increasing job opportunities associated with World War II and the availability of motorized transportation, making the boat trip across the water a matter of minutes rather than hours, rice cultivation came to an end. Three successive years of disastrous flood tides in the forties finished the transition period.

464 Today most families have at least two members who
484 commute daily to jobs on the mainland. Many of the middle-

464 aged men work together on construction crews in nearby towns,
484 some commuting as much as fifty miles each day. Younger men
463 are skilled bricklayers, electricians, and boat operators. Women's work is now much more isolated than was previously the case, with the majority of them engaged in domestic work for individual families or for resort motels on the mainland. With the easing of segregation practices in the region as a whole, some women have moved into jobs in the public domain, such as cashier, store clerk, and delivery of mail. A few
873 women born on the island between 1930 and 1950 have obtained
875 college degrees and now teach in mainland schools or in schools in other states.

871 Education is highly valued by island residents. Only one older man in his eighties was encountered who had never attended school. An early school on the island was held in the church building, paid for by island residents themselves. In the thirties one of the wealthy Northerners who had bought a nearby mainland plantation donated funds for a concrete two-room school building on the island and paid the salaries of its first teachers. This school was an elementary one; those who wanted further education boarded with relatives or friends in nearby towns and attended their high schools. In recent years the county school district has provided boat and bus transportation to mainland schools for both elementary and high school students; the island school was closed with consolidation of small county schools about ten years ago.

533 enjoyed at parties. Congregational singing in church is
535 often accompanied by dance movements and clapping, particu-
[196] larly on the part of older women. Story telling is also a
538 highly valued activity, with males of all ages being especi-
888 ally skilled at this art. With old age, the obligation to
538 remember and relate oral history of importance to the family
or the social group is placed upon both males and females.
Young people spend many hours with old people, listening to
these historical accounts and to the stories of ghosts and
spirits which abound in the area.

621 The closed community of the island can be usefully
compared to more open black communities on the nearby main-
land. Three different island residents expressed spontane-
ously, at different times, their appreciation for living in
a community where "nobody bothered you." The closed nature
of the community makes for less interference from the domi-
•464 nant whites. Land ownership and a relatively long history
484 of independent conduct of their daily affairs on the island
[159] has made for self confidence and willingness to try new jobs
and live in unknown cities at least for short periods of
[166] time. Islanders frequently live and work off the island
during their middle years, returning to live on the land
owned by their families in their old age or when their aging
parents need their help. Geographic isolation has also meant
limited job choices, however. Mone who engaged in business
or professional occupations have been able to remain on the

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island; businessmen and teachers born on the island lived in adjacent mainland communities. On the mainland two subgroups of blacks could be distinguished. An educated elite has owned land for several generations since the Civil War and held important positions in the churches, schools, and--to a limited extent--in government. The majority of mainland blacks, however, do not own land, are poorly educated, and have traveled little. Island residents hold higher social and economic status than this poorer group of mainland blacks, but have been more limited in their occupational choices than the elite group. The social and economic differences between members of the closed community on the river island and the two groups of mainland blacks are reflected in linguistic choices made by the three groups. For comparative purposes, the speech of selected members of the lower mainland group will be compared with that of the island community. The claim will be made that opportunity to participate in social situations in which a given language variety is used is a more important influence on choosing to use that variety than simple contact with its speakers. Members of the lower mainland group retain a higher percentage of creole features in their speech than do island residents, despite the latter group's greater geographic isolation.

562 463 region hold jobs outside the home (see U. S. Census Bureau figures, 1973), the major jobs held by them have been teacher or nurse on the professional level and domestic servant or farm laborer at the non-skilled level. Up until the past decade or two, segregation practices kept black women out of most factory jobs and clerical positions. Figures from the [197] 1970 census show that now two of the top five jobs held by black women in rural South Carolina are at the professional level and require use of a standard variety of English daily. [465] Because salary levels for black women are so low (less than half the median salary for black men in the region), and because almost all of them work at some point in their lives, the incentive to prepare for the higher-paying professional jobs available to them is great. Some anecdotal evidence 562 873 463 464 indicates the strength of this incentive for island young people. In one older family, the women had attended college for four generations; men were skilled construction workers with no college education. One man in this family had financed the college educations of two sisters, working as a skilled craftsman himself. When questioned about why no young men from the island attended college, one young man replied that it made no sense unless he were to study for something "big," like a doctor; laying brick he could make more money than a woman teaching school could make. Occu- 464 562 197 463 pational choices for black men who remain in rural South Carolina are limited chiefly to jobs which require little or

464 562 197 463 no use of standard English and which entail little interaction with a diverse public. The top five jobs held by black men in the region are blue collar and require few language-related tasks. Jobs held by island men and by mainland men of the lower socio-economic group are roughly similar blue collar laboring jobs. Those held by mainland men may require fewer skills than the construction jobs held by island men, but none entail daily use of a standard variety of English to any great extent. Mainland and island women, however, have had strikingly different employment patterns and educational opportunities. Mainland women in the group studied have been confined to domestic service or field labor with a limited number of employers. One of these women had lived on a single plantation all of her eighty years, working for one family most of that time. She had had no formal education and could neither read nor write. [212] No woman born on the island was illiterate. Domestic jobs held by island women were varied, ranging from jobs in resort motels to work for middle-class families in mainland communities. Women who had become teachers had moved off the island to be nearer their jobs in mainland schools. In the [177] middle aged and younger group of women from the island, some had obtained jobs as clerks in mainland stores in the past decade and interacted daily with the diverse tourist population which visits coastal South Carolina in the summers. One woman served as mail carrier for a small mainland

community as well as domestic servant for the post office—a unique job combination which she handled with skill and grace. Increasingly, the job patterns of island women are associated with greater use of standard English than those of either island men or mainland women in the lower socio-economic group.

A second factor which may influence both choice of language variety and choice of occupation is that of identification with island life. A more detailed attitudinal study is needed to describe the dimensions of this factor, but casual observation and conversation with young people gave some indication of its importance. In general, young males seemed to identify more strongly with island life than young females. Fifth-grade boys expressed some regret that a ferry would soon connect the island with the mainland, saying that the island wouldn't be the island anymore. All girls and women who expressed an opinion about it universally welcomed the easier access to the mainland that a ferry would bring. In one large family which had eleven children ranging from eight years to about twenty-four, the mother and father had a long-standing argument about the value of island life. The mother preferred the convenience of mainland living, while the father maintained that they could "have more" on the island, in terms of land and material goods, than they could have anywhere else. A son in his twenties maintained that he would want to raise his children

193 369 urban ghetto which was in sight of City Hall in the upstate community had traveled much less extensively than had the children in the isolated rural community of Georgetown County. The rural children, many of whom had lived for extended periods in northern cities, used far more creole forms in their speech than did urban children in the upcountry. Indications were that these rural children might command a wider range of language structures along the creole continuum than those in the more urban area. In asking about mobility 484 patterns among adult speakers in the island community, I •464 discovered that many, if not most, older men had lived off 562 the island for extended periods of their lives and that most women had commuted off the island on a daily basis to main- [184] land jobs for the past three or four decades. In the mainland community, similar patterns prevailed for men, while women were much less mobile and generally worked near or in 562 their own immediate community. Furthermore, educational 891 patterns for women were different in the two communities to 184 a striking degree. Many mainland women in the older gener- [212] tion were illiterate, while some island women had gone away [423] to college. Land ownership patterns on the island provided a measure of economic security which enabled islanders to help educate their daughters. For these educated island- 167 women, geographic mobility was associated with social mobil- 166 ity as well. None who had college educations now lived on 562 the island; some were married to mainland businessmen and 891

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562 Mobility patterns are different for men and women in
484 the two communities. In the mainland community, men have
464 been considerably more mobile than women. As previously
184 mentioned, one older woman had spent her entire life working as a domestic servant for the owners of a single plantation. The other woman had a more varied employment record as a field laborer, as a cannery worker for a local seafood factory, and as a cook for a middle-class white family. She had never moved far from the sphere of a single plantation, however. Of the men, Speaker 3 in his early thirties had moved onto a plantation with the help of an uncle, and had remained there as a laborer for fifty years. Speaker 4 was the most widely traveled of this group, having received more formal education in his youth than either of the others. He had worked outside the region during a portion of his middle years, acquiring some skills and obtaining better jobs than
[193] the other man. Women in this group use more creole and non-standard forms than men, a pattern which reflects both their lack of mobility and their limited occupational choices.

562 On the island, older men have been slightly more
484 mobile than older women. Of the women, Speaker 5 has been
184 less mobile than Speaker 6, who lived for a portion of her middle years off the island. Speaker 8 was the only island resident encountered who had never attended school and has
[193] been less mobile than Speaker 7. These two men do not differ appreciably in their use of creole forms, however. For

000 of Blacks on the Sea Islands.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SEA ISLANDERS BLACK WORK FORCE

121 464 The following 1970 census figures are for the rural non-farm population of Charleston county and as such can only serve as an indirect indicator of the characteristics of the Black Sea Island labor force. These figures will be followed for comparison with those generated by a more specific survey of the islanders sponsored by the United Methodist Church.

464 162 The total number of persons in the rural labor force is 12,485. This work force is comprised of 8,014 males and 4,606 females. Jobs in different areas of manufacturing engaged the highest number of workers (2,319). The wholesale-retail trades employed 2,271 workers. The personal service industry which includes private household workers was the next big employer (1,970). Five hundred and eleven workers were employed in the agricultural industry.

434 While the median annual income of rural families was $6,895, 28.4% of this population had incomes below the poverty line. The income deficit of this segment was $2,152. There were 2,390 families with these incomes under 434 poverty level. Female head of households had a median 592 income of $3,816. This 1,271 member female work force had 464

434 592 464 an unemployment rate of 3.1%, which compares to a 3.7% ratio for male workers. Females were the heads of 836 of the families with poverty level incomes.

434 On a county basis, the median annual income of Black workers was $4,635. Black female head of households earned a median income of $3,162. Six thousand nine hundred and forty-one or some 44.6% of the 15,576 Black families in the county had incomes below the poverty line. The median income of families below the poverty line was $2,193. Fifteen per cent of the total number of families were receiving public assistance.

The 1960 census reported 10% of the Sea Island families with incomes under $1,000; 65% of this work force earned less than $2,000. This United Methodist Church survey reports a 15% unemployment rate across the islands. Employment in "the area is of a seasonal nature and most people are out of active employment for a large part of the year."[2] 464 794

The discrepancies between these figures are apparent. First hand exposure to the islands would suggest the accuracy of the latter figures. However, the methodological limitations of the church survey effort makes the reported estimates suspect. For example, the researchers were on the islands only one week, during which time they concentrated 464 794 114

[2]Colin Moore and Robert Washington, A Profile of Rural Poverty, A Report on Economic Conditions in the Sea Islands of South Carolina, August, 1970.

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464 794 114 their time and energy in interviewing the leadership personnel of each island, and consequently relied quite heavily on the estimations they provided. The error possibilities which accompany this procedure as the basis for later projection statements are well noted.

362 HOUSING ON THE SEA ISLANDS

There are 11,557 housing units on the five Sea Islands. The median number of persons per unit is 4.01; 3,743 of these units are occupied by Black families. The median number of persons per Black occupied unit is 4.65.

The by island breakdown shows a total of 6,642 units on James Island. One thousand one hundred and twenty-eight of the total are units occupied by Black families. There are 4.63 Blacks and 3.64 Whites per units.

Johns Island has a total of 1,875 units, with 4.01 persons per unit. Blacks occupy 678 of these units and there are 4.58 Blacks per unit.

Wadmalaw Island has 477 units and 4.24 persons per unit. Three hundred and seventy-two of these units are Black occupied, with 4.62 persons per unit.

Yonges Island has 2,224 units and 4.15 persons per unit. Blacks occupy 1,326 of these units; there are 4.78 Blacks per unit.

There are 329 units on Edisto Island, and 4.18 persons per unit. The persons per unit average for Black household

6: Smith I,Y-5 (no date) 1989
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CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

592 The Sea Island family is a cohesive unit. Many of the
178 tested generational relationships were significant. These
177 differences between generations were primarily attributed to effect of changing economic patterns, and rates of exposure to mainland patterns. The island work force are now
464 engaged primarily in 9-5 work patterns. The pattern takes
177 this force into job situations in metropolitan Charleston.
861 While the island men tend to work in clusters in the different industries in the region, women are heavily engaged in domestic service work. The projected results are that women because of the nature of their employment were much more exposed and consequently influenced by the tolerant discipline habits of Whites and mainlanders. In contrast, the clustering work habits of males, in which members of families are employed by the same employer has operated to negate the influence of the new work pattern on male parents. The more demanding work requirements which accom-
861 panies the maintenance of a farm habit was also discussed.
178 It was said that the farm habit upon which the elder is-
561 landers base their discipline references was unknown to
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91 Parrish B-4,5 (ca.1916-1941) 1942
NN23 Sea Islanders NN23
Georgia
St. Simon's Island

O DE ROBE

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The Irish ditch-diggers, employed in repairing the banks enclosing the rice fields of Glynn County, probably account for the Celtic lilt in this tune.[17] The Negroes have always been great borrowers, musically speaking, but, to my mind, that matters little when they make the material so completely their own that the result is entirely different, and often an improvement on the original. This was clearly the case with the ante-bellum melodies of the white plantation owners. A race which could turn dreary book hymns into living creations deserves great applause, and the less said about the source of its inspiration the better—unless from a desire to call attention to its superior musical gift.

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Chorus: O de robe de robe my Lord
De robe all ready now
O de robe de robe my Lord
De robe all ready now.

My mother gone an' she lef' me heah
De robe all ready now
My mother gone an' she lef' me heah
De robe all ready now.

(repeat chorus)

Christian trials just begun
De robe all ready now
Christian trials just begun
De robe all ready now.

(repeat chorus)

Ferry boat goin' to carry us over
De robe all ready now
Ferry boat goin' to carry us over
De robe all ready now.

(repeat chorus)

Joe contributes additional verses:

You get in trouble
De robe all ready now
Write to my Jesus
De robe all ready now.

Write to my Jesus t' sen' another angel
De robe all ready now
Send another angel t' trouble the water
De robe all ready now.

[464]
[567]

[17] *In 1838–39 it was found that the work of digging the canal connecting Brunswick with the Altamaha River—opened its length but never used—was too heavy for the majority of the cotton-field Negroes. Only about two hundred of the original five hundred were retained, and a large number of Irishmen were brought in. From such a contact it can be seen how the word "wake" came to be substituted for "settin'-up," since the two customs—except for the drinking—are quite similar.*

11: Johnson H-4,5 (no date) 1930
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The pickers made no effort to remove the dead leaves from the lint; the ginners allowed stained and unstained cotton to go alike into the gin; moting was accomplished by women who sat upon the floor and beat the cotton with twigs; many planters ginned, moted, and packed the cotton in the same room; and the spinner frequently on opening a bag of cotton would find, in addition to the staple, crushed seeds, potato skins, and parts of old clothing. 175 248

Sea-island cotton prepared in this manner was suited only for coarse fabrics. As the demand for the long staple became greater for making fine laces and muslins and as the high prices went to those who carefully handled their cotton, planters were forced to use more painstaking methods. The gin house, although only a simple barn, had separate rooms for the different processes. The cotton on being gathered was never exposed to the sun as formerly, but dried on a scaffold inside. Upon being dried, it was taken to the whipper which extracted the sand and imperfect fibers, and then sent to the assorters each of whom, provided with boxes for clean cotton, worked before a long table covered with wire or wooden slats, sorting the cotton according to color and fineness. From the sorters the staple went to the gins, and from there to the moting tables where women picked out the broken seeds and stained fibres. The lint was then packed into round bags of about three hundred pounds each, 1,500 pounds of seed cotton being required for a bale of this size.

Whitemarsh B. Seabrook, of Edisto Island, estimated in 1844 that fifty-four laborers[22] were required to prepare [464].

[22] This estimate was based upon the use of the foot-gin which was ordinarily employed in 1860 as well as in 1844. When a steam gin was used the number of ginners was reduced to six; when an Eave's improved steam gin, to three.

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the seed cotton for market as follows: one dryer; one turner and one feeder of the whipper; thirty assorters, grading fifty pounds each a day; twelve ginners, preparing twenty-five pounds of lint each a day; seven moters at forty-three pounds each; a packer and a re-inspector. Estimating the services of each slave at 50 cents a day, Seabrook concluded that it cost a planter $27 to gin a bale of sea-island cotton.[24] On the average plantation it required from fifty to sixty days of labor to cultivate and gin a bale of fine cotton.[25]

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(567)

In the production of naval stores, the cultivation of indigo, and the growth of the long staple cotton, planters soon learned that their most urgent need was a larger labor supply than the sparsely settled province could afford. They turned for this supply to the African slave market.

[24] Seabrook, *Memoir on the Origin, Cultivation and Uses of Cotton*, p. 31.
[25] Allston, *Essay on Sea Coast Crops*, p. 15.

11: Johnson H-4,5 (no date) 1930
(1525-ca. 1880)
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CHAPTER III

THE LABORERS AND THE LAND

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PLANTERS coming to South Carolina from Barbados, Jamaica, Antigua, and St. Kitts brought with them the idea of the plantation regime with slavery as the basis of the labor system. In 1682 Samuel Wilson, writing an account of Carolina for the Lords Proprietors as an advertisement designed to attract settlers, spoke of the necessity of slaves in the province, "without which a Planter can never do any great matter."[1]

PRE-REVOLUTIONARY SLAVE TRADE

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Prior to 1730 the accessible data concerning the slave trade in South Carolina are scanty, but the enactment of numerous laws laying a duty on the importation of slaves indicates that the slave population was rapidly increasing.[2] In the years after 1730, the importation of slaves into South Carolina ranged, when the import duty was not prohibitive, from as low as 72 in 1749 to as high as 11,641 in 1773.[3] The trade was carried on by British and South Carolina merchants, and the slave vessels, largely from New England, usually came consigned to a merchant who conducted a general importing trade in Charles Town. The arrival of a cargo brought planters to the sale in great numbers. Henry Laurens, one of the leading slave importers in the province, mentioned a sale in 1755 attended

[1] "Account of Carolina," in Salley, *Narratives of Early Carolina*, p. 174.

[2] Elizabeth Donnan, "The Slave Trade Into South Carolina Before the Revolution," *American Historical Review*, XXXIII, 804-828.

[3] Based upon estimates made by Elizabeth Donnan, *op. cit.*, pp. 807-809.

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the year. Cotton was planted from about March 20 to April 10; corn about April 1; and sweet potatoes the latter part of March. The routine of labor on a sea-island cotton plantation from planting time until the crops were laid by is illustrated by that on John Fripp's Bluff plantation of 560 acres as recorded in his plantation book for 1856. The spring of this year was cold and wet so that Fripp was late in putting in his crops. 248

He did his first planting on March 20 and 21 when he banked and planted four acres of potatoes. The weather prevented his planting again until April 7 when he put in the rest of his potatoes, two more acres. On the tenth he commenced banking and planting cotton, and by the sixteenth he had put in thirty-eight acres which he recorded were doing "fine." Three days later he began putting in the corn crop and planted that day eighteen acres in the "Savannah swamp field." On the twenty-second he planted twenty-three acres of cotton in the "Marsh field." A week later he commenced the regular corn crop and by the first of May had planted in all sixty-three acres. The next day he planted twelve more acres of cotton in the swamp field and on May 3 put in three-fourths of an acre of rice in the small fresh water ponds by "Point field." On the twelfth and thirteenth he finished planting cotton, making a total of 121 acres.

The hands were busy hoeing cotton from that time until the twenty-second of May when they stopped to put in fifteen acres of "Shinney Peas." Two days later Fripp detailed a few hands to put in an acre of rice near the swamp field. All hands resumed cotton hoeing until July 5 when Fripp began to plant the first of his potato slips. 248 464 567

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From then until August a few hands put in a half acre or less a day, planting in all sixteen acres of potatoes. Work on the cotton crop stopped about the middle of July. Fripp finished planting about the first of September when he had two acres of potato slips put in for seed and three-fourths of an acre of turnip seed sown.

By November 29 he had gathered and finished "breaking in" the corn crop, having made 650 bushels, less than 12 bushels to the acre. By December 9 he had finished digging potatoes, having made a poor crop, and four days later he had gathered all the cotton. On December 13 the hands began processing the cotton and did not finish ginning the crop of thirty-five bales until February 12, just in time to begin listing the soil in preparation for drilling in the cotton seed a few weeks later. During the slack periods, the hands had been engaged in digging and hauling marsh mud to manure the fields, cutting marsh grass for fodder and also for fertilizer, cutting and sawing wood, and ditching fields.[1]

St. Helena Island planters, as a rule, obtained the simplest of farm implements for their laborers. Most of the work in cultivating sea-island cotton was done with the hoe. In 1822 there was not a plough or scythe on Edisto, one of the best cultivated of the Sea Islands. The largest plantations had only two or three carts; the use of oxen was unknown.[2] By 1844 nearly every plantation on the island had a cart and mule or yoke of oxen to every six taskable hands. At the close of the ante-bellum period, however, John F. Townsend was the only planter who

[1] MS, John E. Fripp, Bluff Plantation Book.
[2] Seabrook, *Memoir on the Cultivation of Cotton*, p. 25.

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having assumed management in 1802, finding the gang good, but "very disorderly which is invariably the case when there is a frequent change of managers."[9] Later his son succeeded him.

Louis Manigault, after having made only half a crop due to his new overseer's inexperience, wrote, "He says 'he will do better another year, that now he sees into it,' and as is well known, 'Never change an Overseer if You can help it.' We try him once (but only once) more."[10] But he proved no better the second year than the first. "Elated by a strong and very false religious feeling he began to injure the plantation a vast deal, placing himself on a par with the Negroes, by even joining in with them at their prayer meetings, breaking down long established discipline, which in every Case is so difficult to preserve, favouring and siding in any difficulty with the people, against the Drivers, besides causing numerous grievances."[11] And so Manigault was forced to look for a new overseer.

ORGANIZATION OF SLAVE LABOR

Planters learned early in the use of slave labor that it was necessary to give certain trusted Negroes limited authority over the others so that with a change of overseers the plantation routine might be disturbed as little as possible. On the large plantations the seasoned Negroes trained the new ones and were responsible for their behaviour. In the early days of the plantation regime, when a gang of fresh Africans was purchased, they were assigned

[9] R. King, Jr., "On the Management of the Butler Estate," *Southern Agriculturist*, Dec., 1828.
[10] Phillips, *Plantation and Frontier*, I, 143.
[11] *Ibid.*, p. 145.

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in groups to certain reliable slaves who initiated them into the ways of the plantation. These drivers, as they were called, had the right of issuing or withholding rations to the raw recruits and of inflicting minor punishments. They taught the new slaves to speak the broken English which they knew and to do plantation work which required little skill, gathering oyster shells to be burned for making lime, mixing concrete from sand, lime, and shells, cutting wood, and ditching fields. At the end of a year, the master or overseer for the first time directed the work of the new Negro who now had become "tamed," assigning him to a special task of plantation work along with the other seasoned hands who had long since learned to obey orders, to arise when the conch blew at "day clean," to handle a hoe in listing and banking, to stand still when a white man spoke.

The planter usually divided his hands into four classes: drivers, tradesmen, house servants, and field hands. The number of drivers on a plantation depended upon its size. Only the largest of the St. Helena plantations had as many as two. It was the driver's business to superintend generally the field hands, and he carried a small club or whip as his "wand of office." He issued rations; he saw that each laborer's task was properly performed; and he inflicted corporal punishment whenever he saw fit, always, however, subject to the overseer's or master's order. In the absence of the overseer or owner, the driver usually succeeded to much of their authority, and in many cases knew more about the details of plantation affairs than the owner himself. For instance, when St. Helena Island was captured by Federal troops in 1861,

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the drivers quite generally remained at home issuing rations and directing the work of the plantation.

R. King, Jr., overseer of the Butler estate, thought that the selection of drivers was one of the "grand points" in plantation management. A cruel driver could demoralize the whole plantation, while an honest one could keep the slaves busy and happy. "An order from a driver," he said in explaining his method of plantation discipline, "is to be as implicity obeyed as if it came from myself, nor do I counteract the execution, (unless directly injurious,) . . . It would be endless for me to superintend the drivers and field hands too, and would of course make them useless."[12] Miss Harriet Ware, a missionary to St. Helena Island in 1862, described Limus, a driver on one of the St. Helena plantations, as being "very smart" and easy to learn. "He has the energy and *cuteness* and big eye for his own advantage of a born New Englander. He is not very moral or scrupulous, and the church-members will tell you 'not yet,' with a smile, if you ask whether he belongs to them. But he leads them all in enterprise, and his ambition and consequent prosperity make his example a very useful one on the plantation."[13]

Next to the driver in importance and authority were the tradesmen and the house servants. While the num-

[12] *Southern Agriculturist*, Dec. 1828. "But the grand point [in managing the Butler estate] was to suppress the brutality and licentiousness practiced by the principal men on it; (say the drivers and tradesmen). More punishment is inflicted on every plantation by the men in power from private pique, than from a neglect of duty. . . . The driver to screen favourites, or apply their time to his own purposes, imposes a heavy tax on some. Should they murmur, an opportunity is taken, months after, to punish those unfortunate fellows for not doing their own and other tasks. . . . As an evidence of the various opportunities that a brutal driver has to gratify his revenge, . . . let any planter go into his field, and in any Negro's task he can find apparently just grounds for punishment."

[13] *Letters from Port Royal*, pp. 37-38.

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THE TASK SYSTEM

Less than half of a planter's total number of laborers could usually be counted upon for a full day's work.

When Captain Basil Hall visited the United States in 1827 and 1828 he found on a sea-island plantation on St. Simon's Island, Georgia, 122 slaves. Of these, seventy were men and women between the ages of fourteen and fifty; forty-eight were children under the age of fourteen; and four were superannuated. The seventy workers were classified as follows: thirty-nine full hands, sixteen three-quarter hands, eleven half hands, and four quarter hands. Out of seventy persons, therefore, the planter had fifty-seven and a half "taskable hands," but those working in the fields were only forty-four taskables, while the other thirteen and a half were employed as cart drivers, nurses, cooks for the Negroes, carpenters, house servants, and stock minders.[20]

The number of taskable hands on a plantation varied from year to year. Children were not sent to the field until they were fourteen, but were put to work at minor jobs, pulling weeds, "minding child," picking up trash, washing dishes. Superannuated slaves were also given tasks calling for little physical exertion; such as, gardening, tending horses, nursing, sewing. *Enceinte* women did half tasks until confinement, and women with suckling babies also did half task until the child was eight months old. A slave who had been sick did a portion of a task until he had sufficiently recovered to resume his accustomed amount of work.

[20] Captain Basil Hall, *Travels in North America in the Years 1827 and 1828*, II, 229.

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lives in this region of malaria and typhoid, to train the Negro for citizenship.[21] While some refused to accept any remuneration, others served at from $30 to $50 a month, only one receiving as high as $100, a doctor on North Edisto. All, however, took their quarters in the deserted houses of the planters and received soldiers' rations from the Government.

In two weeks after their arrival each superintendent and teacher had been assigned a post and was at work, but his task was overwhelming. Stirred up by the careless and conflicting talk of the soldiers, victimized by the cotton agents, the Negroes were unwilling pupils. "We found them a herd of suspicious savages," wrote Edward

[21] MS in Treasury Department on superintendents and teachers for Port Royal. Those first appointed to plantations on St. Helena Island were as follows: Edward W. Hooper, of Boston, 22 years old, graduate of Harvard, served without compensation, teacher and superintendent at Pope's plantation; Edward S. Philbrick, of Brookline, Mass., 34 years old, railroad engineer and architect, received no compensation, superintendent at Coffin's Point; William C. Gannett, of Boston, 22 years old, divinity student, no compensation the first month, superintendent and teacher with Philbrick at Coffin's Point; James H. Palmer, of Southampton, N. H., 25 years old, medical student, assistant superintendent and teacher at Coffin's Frogmore plantation, $30 a month; David F. Thorpe, of Providence, R. I., student at Brown University, 25 years old, superintendent at Oliver Fripp's plantation, $40 a month; Dr. Adoniram Judson Wakefield, of Boston, 38 years old, physician, located on Thomas B. Fripp's plantation, medical attendant of Negroes in that section, $50 a month; T. Edwin Ruggles, of Milton, Mass., 24 years old, graduate of Yale, farmer, superintendent at Rev. Richard Fuller's plantation, $50 a month; Richard Soule, Sr., 49 years old, civil engineer and teacher, superintendent at Coffin's Frogmore, $50 a month; Dr. Charles H. Brown, of Boston, 45 years old, physician, medical attendant for Negroes in vicinity of Pope's plantation, $40 a month; William E. Park, of Andover, Mass., 24 years old, graduate of Yale, superintendent at Capt. Oliver Fripp's plantation, compensation undetermined; James E. Taylor, of Andover, Mass., 23 years old, student, superintendent and teacher at Dr. Jenkin's plantation, compensation undetermined; Samuel D. Phillips, of Boston, 23 years old, medical student and graduate of Harvard, nephew of Wendell Phillips, superintendent at Dr. Pope's plantation, $30 a month; George M. Wells, of Providence, R. I., 20 years old, clerk, teacher, plantation undetermined, salary undetermined; Robert N. Smith, of New York, 46 years old, superintendent at one of Dr. Jenkins' plantations, salary undetermined.

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S. Philbrick, a prosperous engineer and architect who had left his home in Brookline, Massachusetts, to serve without remuneration in this social experiment, contributing himself $1,000 to the cause.[22] The superintendents generally had five or six plantations in charge, and, sometimes, with the assistance of a teacher, had as many as 500 Negroes to supervise. The superintendents found their laborers in need of clothes and implements, for the battle of Port Royal had occurred a few weeks before the customary time to issue winter clothes, and hoes were never given out until February. Moreover, the planting season had already advanced six weeks before the superintendents assumed charge of their respective plantations. In addition to these handicaps, they had to learn something about the methods of agriculture which they were supposed to oversee.

In every case the superintendent found it necessary to lean heavily upon the plantation driver for information and assistance and to follow the system of plantation management already established by the former owners. The driver was instructed to go about his accustomed work, stake off each hand's task as before, and manage the details of planting. The Negroes had already begun putting their own patches into corn, but they were reluctant to plant cotton, and it took much artful persuasion to induce them to do so. Thus, while the provision crop on St. Helena for 1862 was about the same as in ante-bellum times, the cotton crop fell far short. The cotton crops from both St. Helena and Ladies islands amounted to only $40,000.[23]

[22] *Letters from Port Royal*, p. 181. [23] *Ibid.*, p. 109.

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The new system of labor differed from the plantation management of the ante-bellum regime in two important particulars. The lash, under no circumstance, was to be used in obtaining discipline, and the laborers were to be paid for their work. The money, however, was slow to come, and the hands worked for six weeks or more on short rations and promises. On some islands, which had been entirely stripped of provisions by the Army, the Negroes received Government rations, but St. Helena Island was considered to have ample provisions to feed the laborers. "They are crying loudly & and with some reason, that we don't treat them so well as their old masters," wrote Philbrick to Pierce. 'They have no *salt* [,] no molasses, sugar or fresh meat. They see the soldiers kill their cattle & sit in idleness (as it seems to them) while their masters gave them a beef once a month & an allowance of the other luxuries. They consider tobacco a necessity, but can't get it at any price."[24]

They were unmindful of the fact that the Treasury Department was spending money to equip the plantations with seeds, implements, and mules, for in slavery days the planters had done this and fed them too. By the middle of May, the Department had forwarded Pierce $10,000 to pay for labor and had spent $15,000 for implements, seeds, and mules, having purchased and sent to Port Royal ninety mules and ten horses.[25] Early in May Pierce made the first payment to his laborers, $1 an acre

[24] Port Royal Correspondence, E. S. Philbrick to E. L. Pierce.

[25] *Official Records*, ser. III, vol. II, serial no. 123, p. 55. This was actually a very small amount for the purpose when it is considered that the Department was fostering the cultivation of some 13,795 acres. See Pierce, "Second Report," *Rebellion Record*, sup. I, 318.

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for all cotton planted, distributed among them according to the amount done by each, a very small sum, they thought, for listing, planting, and hoeing. Pierce had planned to pay the Negroes for their work a little at a time, hoping to make them see that it was to their interest to tend the cotton after it was planted, but they were slow to grasp the significance of wages.[26]

Plantation work was further interrupted and the suspicion of the Negroes further aroused by an unexpected order from Major-General David Hunter, commanding the Department of the South, for the collection of all Negroes on the plantations between eighteen and forty-five able to bear arms, who were to be sent forthwith to the camp at Hilton Head. Pierce protested against the order as being contrary to the President's intentions and the instructions of the Treasury Department, and he was finally able to obtain the exemption of the drivers and a promise of the return of all those who were unwilling to bear arms. Nevertheless, he lost 600 laborers by this conscription and forfeited the confidence of many who were left behind.

The confusion resulting from the order disorganized the whole system, for it discouraged the superintendents and antagonized the Negroes. In most instances, the Negroes were taken from the fields without being permitted to go home for so much as a jacket, the soldiers, however, sometimes allowing wives and children to fetch a few necessary articles. On some plantations the wailing and screaming were loud and prolonged, and the women threw

[26] Pierce, "Second Report," p. 320; *Letters and Diary of Laura M. Towne*, p. 18.

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operation a system whereby he might train the Negro to ways of thrift and independence. Nor did the Government ever give the Negroes tools and farm equipment except as laborers on the government-operated plantations. When the Negro became a landowner he equipped his own farm from supplies at the trade stores for which he paid prices two or three times greater than those in the New York market;[9] or he bought equipment at the auction sales of confiscated property, paying the highest prices and often bidding against white men.

Nevertheless, it was a fact that the character of the Negro as a hired laborer had been injured by the inflated prices which the soldiers paid them for their wares and by the injudicious policy of their well-meaning friends of the North. White planters, for instance, were jealously watched by officials of the Freedmen's Bureau who were over-anxious lest the freedmen be victimized. Officials of the Freedmen's Bureau laid down the terms of the contract between planter and employee,[10] giving the employer practically no control over his laborers.

Under the system of labor thus established the Negro worked for his employer less than three months in the year.[11] He seldom worked more than five hours a day and half of that time he spent on his own crop of corn, potatoes, and peanuts so that the planter had the use of his services about one-fourth of each working day. In addition, the planter supplied each family of laborers with

[9] Reid, *After the War*, p. 114.

[10] See Webster, "The Operations of the Freedmen's Bureau in South Carolina," *Smith College Studies*, I, 93-104, 113-118.

[11] See "The South As It Is," *Nation*, Dec., 1865, p. 747. Dennett interviewed most of the planters on St. Helena. See also *Sen. Ex. Doc.* no. 6, 39th Cong., 2d sess., p. 123.

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175 a house and fuel and all the land for their own use that
464 they chose to cultivate, usually three or four acres. Upon
466 the corn land, however, they paid a rent of a bushel to the
[427] acre and usually supplied all the sweet potatoes needed by
[465] the white family. But the planter also paid his laborers a money wage of about $15 an acre for listing, planting, and hoeing the cotton crop and 2½ cents a pound for picking it. The withdrawal of the army and a succession of crop failures were going, however, in a few years to change the situation.

THE STARVING TIME

175 The only good crop of sea-island cotton grown during
248 the Federal occupation was that of 1863. After the war, sea-island cotton planters faced a series of failures and the freedmen began to feel the pinch of hard times. "The negroes' crops did not turn out very well, as a general rule," wrote Charles Ware from St. Helena in 1865, "want of manure and careless working being the principal causes; the caterpillar did a great deal of damage."[12] The
[458] crops of 1866, 1867, 1868, were likewise failures, and at the same time the price of cotton dropped. These conditions drove several of the northern planters from St. Helena; and, for the first time, large tracts of land lay idle. Miss Towne who had bought a part of Frogmore plantation wrote in 1868, "I don't believe a white man would run the place for love or what money he could make, because there are so few white men, and so much unleased land."[13]

Planters everywhere in the coastal region were laboring against great odds. Factors in Charleston and Savan-

[12] *Letters from Port Royal*, pp. 297, 298. [13] *Letters and Diary*, p. 189.

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towns where they found employment as servants and day laborers. Miss Towne speaks of their flocking back to St. Helena once a year "from Savannah, Charleston, Bull River, and all about" to attend the "exhibition" of Penn School.[18] Robert Smalls, famous during the war as the Beaufort Negro who turned over a Confederate steamer to Union officers and later conspicuous as a Congressman from South Carolina, attempted in 1879 to lead a group of Negroes from St. Helena's Parish to Arizona.

The discovery and utilization of the phosphate beds along the coast of South Carolina came in 1870 as a godsend to black laborers as well as to the whites who organized the companies. Many a St. Helena black man left his farm for his wife and children to cultivate while he went to the "Rock," as the phosphate mines in the coastal counties were called, to get "cash money." When digging was commenced just off Eddings' Point on St. Helena, the news "set all the boys wild."[19] In 1871 the *Beaufort Republican*, after announcing the enlargement of one of the phosphate mines, added, "Our colored friends can look to the future with pleasure and know that they will not have to roam over the country next summer to look for work but will find it on Bull River at the Oak Point Mine."[20] When the phosphate beds were exhausted, oyster factories began to be erected at Beaufort, on Ladies Island, and on St. Helena so that the Negroes still had a means of earning a little ready money either as hands in the factories or as laborers on the oyster boats. There were, also, still five or six white families on St. Helena

[18] *Ibid.*, p. 286.
[19] *Ibid.*, p. 273.
[20] *Beaufort Republican*, Nov. 23, 1871.

11: Johnson H-4,5 (no date) 1930
(1525-ca. 1880)
NN23 Sea Islanders NN23
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who owned and operated plantations and drew their labor from the Island.

Despite the fact that the majority of the inhabitants of St. Helena never made more than enough to carry them through the year, there were some who prospered. At the close of the Reconstruction period, small two-story houses with porches, window panes, and a neat coat of paint had begun to appear.[21] There were some who still rode to church, as in the days just after the war, in northern buggies drawn by trotting horses, and poverty-stricken, indeed, was the man who did not have a Sunday suit.

Just as St. Helena was beginning again to be a little prosperous, the disastrous storm of 1893 in a day and night of fearful wind and rain spread destruction everywhere. The crops had not been so promising in many years, but the tidal wave which swept over the Island in August destroyed the greater part of them. Houses were carried away and there was scarcely a family which did not suffer the loss of some member. Juliana, nurse in the family of James Ross Macdonald, white landowner and part owner of the chief store of the Island, described the storm to her mistress who was away at the time:

> My fren,' the win' blow dat day fer true, but I ain't t'ink much about 'm, fer I see de win' blow nuff times in ma life. 'Bout four o'clock Sunday evenin' I lock de do' an' walk to Cousin Richard's house. . . . De house ben full ob people, an' I just get dere in time fer de win' bruck a-loose fer true, an' make sich a noise an' rock de house so, eberybody start to cry an' pray one time. Well, sir! 'stead ob growin' better he grow wuss, an' bime-bye de wing

[21] Benjamin, "The Sea Islands," *Harper's Monthly*, LVII, 858.